

You heard the Secretary say that yesterday the United States Conference of Mayors said that as much as 43 percent of the homeless population may now be parents and children. The mayors' press conference yesterday was the first one ever attended by an administration official since the mayors formed their task force on homelessness 10 years ago. And I want to thank again the leadership at HUD, starting with the Secretary, for bringing new energy and attention to this.

I didn't have much to do with it except to ask that simple question when my longtime friend Henry Cisneros and I talked about this. I just said, "Will we ever be able to show the American people that there aren't so many people on the streets?"

On Sunday there was a wonderful piece in the New York Times Sunday Magazine about a woman who has transformed an old stereotype of single-room occupancy hotels and replaced it with a new model to help meet the long-term needs we're discussing. She's reinvented this single-room occupancy housing to create well-kept places and integrate services for people with special needs and disabilities. And in so doing, she's helping people regain control over their lives.

None of the initiatives of this administration—strengthening work and family and community—can be done without forming a partnership with people on the front-lines, like that lady and like so many of you in this room, the people who give of themselves not just on Christmas Day but every day. But as Christmas approaches, I hope the American people will, in all their Christmas prayers, save room for a simple one,

that all of us somehow might realize the humility to know how blessed we are to be in this country, and still to remember those who are not blessed, though they are among our midst.

This Christmas all many of them wish for is a place to spend the night. But what we know is, if they're going to have a place to spend the night, they have to have a place where they can live and grow and deal with the demons that bedevil so many of us in this country.

I have a list—I won't read it to you but I was—that Henry gave me that kind of is representative of the kinds of people who are getting these grants. Sometimes I think we make them more inaccessible to ordinary Americans by talking about things like support services and transition services and this, that, the other thing. But in plain English, what we're trying to do is take people who are battered and bruised and broken, but who still have a lot of God's grace left in them, and find a way to bring all that back to the surface and put their own lives back more in their control.

I hope this new approach works. If it does, it will be because of a lot of you out there on the front-lines who are making it work, like this fine and funny man of the cloth. If it does, we will have given the American people a good Christmas present.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. John Steinbruck, pastor, Luther Place Memorial Church.

Message on the Observance of Christmas *December 22, 1993*

Warmest greetings to all who are celebrating Christmas in this season of hope.

Each year at this time, we gather together with our loved ones. We teach our children to believe that, with faith and hard work, their dreams can come true. We reach out to each other in caring and fellowship. We look to the future with hope and always with the most earnest of mankind's prayers—the prayer for peace.

Thankfully, at this Christmastime, we can joyously celebrate the results of our prayers.

Around the world, people are embracing the promise of the post-Cold War era, throwing off the shackles of tyranny and committing themselves to the ideals of democracy. Old enemies who met for centuries on the battlefield are now meeting on common ground to discuss peace. In our own country, many citizens are

rededicating themselves to improving their communities and to ending the crime and violence that still threaten us. This has indeed been a year worthy of the Prince of Peace.

I have always believed that the Christmas spirit of giving and caring joins children and parents across the country and around the world. This year, let us listen to the dreams

of our children and gain strength from their idealism. On this holiday, let us reach out to the people around us and work for a world at peace.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a very merry Christmas.

BILL CLINTON

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's Telephone Conversation With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

December 22, 1993

The President telephoned Russian President Yeltsin in Moscow this morning. The two leaders spoke for 30 minutes.

The President offered his congratulations to President Yeltsin and the Russian people on the recent free and fair elections held in Russia and on the adoption of a new constitution. President Yeltsin said that he and the Russian Government intended to work well and constructively with the new Parliament.

The two leaders discussed preparations for their January meetings in Moscow, agreeing that part of the agenda would include a review of U.S.-Russian economic cooperation to date. In this connection the President reaffirmed strong

U.S. support for economic reform and democracy in Russia. President Yeltsin confirmed his intention to continue a firm course of economic reform in Russia.

The two Presidents also discussed foreign policy issues that will be on the agenda for their January meetings. They agreed on the need to continue the cooperative tripartite dialog with Ukraine, with the aim of resolving the complex set of nuclear issues. President Yeltsin affirmed that Russia had no intention of interfering in the affairs of its neighbors. The President reiterated the U.S. hope for concrete movement on the question of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia and Estonia.

Nomination for Deputy Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

December 22, 1993

The President announced today that he will nominate Michael K. Kirk to be the Deputy Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks at the Department of Commerce.

"Michael Kirk has a long record of public service at the Patent and Trademark Office. I

am confident that he will do well as Deputy Commissioner."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Nomination for Director of the United States Mint

December 22, 1993

The President announced today that he intends to nominate Phillip N. Diehl, until re-

cently the Chief of Staff at the Department of the Treasury, to be the Director of the U.S.